

NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION Meeting
December 1, 2010 MINUTES
Location: Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present: Joe De Vito Chair, Chris Fortunato, Officer Jeff Mace, Peter Harrington, Jeff Mace, Ellen Manning, Stephanie Lapham, Terence Sack, John Staulo, Robert Staulo, Kirsten Tuohy, Students: Zachery Eagle (NSHS)
Regrets: Richard Dyer, Stephan Ross, Donna Gordon (resigned)
Staff: Ruth Hoshino, School Nurse Leader, Health and Human Services
Guests: Tom Pomeroy
Student Interns: Teekhon Davidoff(NSHS), Jaya Forsythe(NNHS), Khane Grant(NNHS), Issac Rogers(NSHS), Zoë Smith(Dana Hall), Jasy Sobel (NSHS)

The meeting was opened at 7:07 PM and chaired by Joe De Vito.

A vote to accept the minutes of November 3, 2010 was passed.

Treasurer's report: The budget for FY 2010 operating budget is \$2500. No new activity.

New or Old Business

Mayor's Public Service Internship Program Update: At recent meetings, the student interns decided to focus on a few topics. These include: bullying, violence, peer pressure, and alcohol and other drugs. A discussion between the teen interns and the Youth Commission members took place. The following are the main points/questions raised:

- Bullying
 - Extreme examples of bullying that include the threat of violence or harm would initiate an intervention that would include adults
 - With more subtle forms of bullying, it is hard to know if teens would get involved
 - Knowing what one would **want** to do may be different from what one would **actually** do
 - It is a challenge to get people involved and to change people's behavior
 - Public service announcements and endorsement by celebrities can influence teens
 - It takes courage for teens to stand up for others - they may worry about the backlash
 - Doing something for someone else can carry the reward of making you feel better
 - Teens focus on themselves so if they realized that helping someone might make them feel better, this could be an incentive
 - It is beneficial to hear from people with first hand experience – for example a victim of bullying talking about their experience or a former drug abuser talking about their recovery
- Building Character
 - Providing education about one's "character" seems lacking in schools
 - Teens and adults prefer to hear suggestions and guidance rather than being told how to live their lives
 - Teens can learn from mentors but it should be one-to-one, optional rather than required, someone about the same age
 - Schools should foster a culture of respect and teach teens how to live by these values
 - Requiring a small amount of community service may have the inherent reward of feeling good to be helping someone else
 - Parents need to be educated on what it is like to be a teen in 2010

The idea was raised of recording the discussions that the teen interns have so that others can view it. The interns will be deciding on a teen social event during 2011.

The Youth Commission members were grateful to have this group of students at the meeting and look forward to having them return.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 5, 2011 at 7 PM Respectfully submitted by Ruth Hoshino